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Chairman: Mr. Bródi ..... (Hungary)
Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions: Ms. McLurg

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The meeting was called to order at 3.20 p.m.

Agenda item 132: Administrative and budgetary aspects of the financing of the United Nations peacekeeping operations (*continued*)

United Nations Logistics Base at Brindisi
(A/63/626, A/63/824 and Corr.1)

1. **Mr. Yamazaki** (Controller), introducing the performance report on the budget of the United Nations Logistics Base at Brindisi (UNLB) for the period from 1 July 2007 to 30 June 2008 (A/63/626), said that expenditure for that period amounted to $40,201,500. The approved budget for the period amounted to $40,379,600, leading to an unencumbered balance of $178,100 and a utilization rate of 99.6 per cent. The decrease in resource requirements had resulted from lower expenditure on facilities, infrastructure and spare parts and had been partly offset by additional salary costs caused mainly by depreciation of the United States dollar against the euro.

2. The General Assembly was invited to decide on the treatment of the unencumbered balance of $178,100 and of other income for the period ended 30 June 2008 amounting to $3,031,700, and, in connection with the strategic deployment stocks, to take note of the Secretary-General's report.

3. The proposed budget of UNLB for the period from 1 July 2009 to 30 June 2010 (A/63/824 and Corr.1) was 49.2 per cent higher than the resources that had been approved for 2008/09, reflecting the strengthening and relocation to UNLB of the Standing Police Capacity; an increase in national staff; establishment of the secondary telecommunications facility in Valencia, Spain; and additional equipment and facilities related to the proposed increase in staffing. The additional resource requirements for national staff had been partly offset by lower requirements for general temporary assistance.

4. The General Assembly was invited to approve the amount of $68,284,300 for the maintenance of the Base from 1 July 2009 to 30 June 2010 and to prorate that amount among the budgets of individual active peacekeeping operations.

5. **Ms. McLurg** (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions), introducing the related report of the Advisory Committee (A/63/746/Add.17), said that the report on the longer-term role and future development of UNLB, requested by the General Assembly in its resolution 61/277 and contained in annex II to the report of the Secretary-General (A/63/824), should be viewed in the context of the global support strategy for United Nations peacekeeping operations to be presented to the General Assembly within one year. While that strategy was awaited, the Advisory Committee recommended against approval of a number of the proposed staffing changes; the related reduction in the proposed budget for 2009/10 would amount to $9,888,100.

6. The Advisory Committee had noted that the proposed budget included a provision of $7.1 million for the implementation of various projects under the longer-term perspective. While some projects might be rescheduled until the global support strategy was available, postponement of others risked impairing the operation of the Base. The Advisory Committee therefore recommended the authorization of a provision of $6.1 million for the necessary construction works and electrical upgrades, reducing the provision originally proposed by $1 million and bringing the total reduction recommended by the Advisory Committee to $10,888,100.

7. **Ms. Krahulcová** (Czech Republic), speaking on behalf of the European Union, said that all required documentation must be distributed on time and in all six official languages. That had not been the case with the Advisory Committee report on UNLB. The recent trend towards late issuance should be stopped, as it affected the quality and speed of the Committee's deliberations. The European Union wished to know what concrete steps would be taken to prevent any recurrence of that situation and appealed to the Chairman to collaborate closely with the Advisory Committee and the Secretariat in strictly observing General Assembly resolution 61/266, rule 51 of its rules of procedure and other linguistic provisions for the various United Nations bodies.

8. **The Chairman** said that he would continue to work with the Advisory Committee and the Secretariat to ensure the timely submission of documents in all official languages. The Advisory Committee had prepared its report on UNLB under exceptional time constraints.

Other matters

9. **Mr. Gürber** (Switzerland) said that his country's authorities and general public needed to understand

fully the legal bases relied on by the Secretary-General when assessing, retaining or returning Member States' contributions. His delegation wished to know the exact basis for the practice of retaining the cash balance available in the accounts of closed peacekeeping missions. As the Secretary-General, in his report on the updated financial position of closed peacekeeping missions (A/63/581), had invited the General Assembly to approve retention of the cash balance in the accounts of 16 closed missions, his delegation also wished to know what action would be taken if approval was withheld. It assumed that the Secretary-General would administer the accounts concerned in accordance with the Organization's Financial Regulations and Rules. If the Organization's accounting policies were properly transparent, the Secretariat should be able to respond to his delegation's questions without having to consult the Office of Legal Affairs for an opinion.

10. His delegation had not yet received a satisfactory response to its question regarding the amount that each Member State would receive if the cash balance of the 16 closed peacekeeping missions were to be returned. It wished the Secretariat to provide written responses to all its concerns within 24 hours so that the Committee could pursue a decision by consensus on the basis of sound information and in accordance with the rules and regulations of the Organization.

11. **Ms. Krahulcová** (Czech Republic), speaking on behalf of the European Union, supported the request made by the representative of Switzerland.

12. **Mr. Afifi** (Egypt) said that the current absence of consensus on the recurrent issue of the accounts of closed peacekeeping missions should not be allowed to deprive active missions of the resources they required to discharge their mandates effectively. He appealed for logical and balanced debate that did not focus exclusively on the Organization's rules and regulations.

The meeting rose at 3.45 p.m.